Clean Set of Claims

1. A voice messaging system, comprising:

a telephone line interface;

a voice recorder/playback module;

a controller adapted to control functions of said voice messaging system; and

a ring signal bypass module adapted to detect a presence of a non-ring signal initiated by a caller utilizing said telephone line interface indicating a presence of an incoming call, and to cause said voice messaging system to direct said incoming call to said voice recorder/playback module without an audible ring signal to announce said incoming call by said voice messaging system.

4. A method of allowing bypass of a ring signal in a voice messaging system, comprising:

receiving a non-ring signal initiated by a caller at a telephone line interface indicating a presence of an incoming call to said voice messaging system; and

answering said incoming call by said voice messaging system without an audible ring signal to announce said incoming call by said voice messaging system.

8. Apparatus for allowing bypass of a ring signal in a voice messaging system, comprising:

means for receiving a non-ring signal initiated by a caller at a telephone line interface indicating a presence of an incoming call to said voice messaging system; and

means for answering said incoming call by said voice messaging system without an audible ring signal to announce said incoming call by said voice messaging system.

12. A method of allowing a calling party to bypass a ring signal in a voice messaging system of a called party, said voice messaging system including voice message memory for recording a voice message, the method comprising:

providing a ring signal bypass module in said voice messaging system;

activating said ring signal bypass module based on a request from said calling party; and

bypassing an audible ring signal by said voice messaging system announcing an incoming call from said calling party to said voice messaging system.